

## Exercises in Form

### Summary

Two men are standing on the deck of a sport boat in the middle of the ocean. Six days before they were on a fishing trip off the coast of Virginia, near Chesapeake, but a storm carried them an undetermined distance out to sea. Both men are completely naked and their skin glistens in the sunlight. They ate the last can of Campbell's tomato soup two days before and now the bigger of them is saying he is hungry. The other one ignores him and the big one persists. He is approaching him with a crowbar now.

### Unnecessarily Specific Summary

Two men between the ages of thirty-three and thirty-nine are standing on the deck of a white sport boat with a blue racing stripe. They are in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. The men were in Virginia on a fishing trip, both of them having come from Pennsylvania. They left from Chesapeake Bay but they had been visiting Assateague Island earlier that morning and had to come back and put fuel in the boat before they left. They have been out on the ocean for six days, eight hours, and fifty-eight minutes since a severe thunderstorm hit the bay and carried them away. They had only planned on being out for about three hours so they only brought two cans of Vienna sausages and some oranges to eat. Two days ago they ate a can of Campbell's tomato soup, and the man who owns the boat couldn't remember how long it had been in the cabin, but he told his friend that it had at least been there since last summer. Now they are both naked, and they are both a deep shade of red because they threw their jeans and striped polo shirts to the deck that morning because they

were getting too hot in them. The biggest man, who is so fat that his belly hangs over his penis, tells the smaller, whose penis is visible, that he is hungry. The smaller one pretends not to hear him but he does. The big man, who owns the boat, retrieves a steel crowbar, painted orange, from under one of the deck seats, and walks toward his companion with it held above his head.

## Recipe

Ingredients:

2 men (clothing optional)

1 sport boat (fishing variety)

1 can of Campbell's tomato soup

1 ocean

1 storm

1 crowbar (steel)

Directions:

Place boat in ocean. Place men on boat. Pour in storm and stir. Allow mixture to sit. Mix in soup. Allow mixture to sit. Give one man crowbar. Allow mixture to sit.

## Criticism

At the beginning of scene thirteen, we see that the men have resorted to removing their clothing, which lies on the floor of the deck around them. The camera cuts to each man in quick succession, which suggests that the lust between the two men is becoming apparent to the two of them. This is further evidenced by the fact that they have not spoken to each other after the infamous "Campbell's soup" scene; critic Susan Lörtehoved says in her essay "The Soup of Sigmund: Food as Phallus in *Clever 21<sup>st</sup> Century Film Title that Comes Off as Really Pretentious and Tells the Viewer Nothing About the Concept of the Movie Itself*" suggests

that the soup can represents the phallic stage that both men never experienced. It is in the “crowbar” scene, when both men are naked, that they become obsessed with sexual experimentation<sup>1</sup>.

### **Absurdist Play**

#### **MAN 1:**

We have been at sea for six days.

#### **MAN 2:**

We have.

*Fin*

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#### <sup>1</sup> **Footnote**

The author thinks that a soup can is a phallic symbol. He explains this by using someone else’s theory, which ends up requiring even greater explanation. That is why there is this footnote. This is where a very long list of theories that vaguely apply to the author’s point would be, because appeals to authority make opinions valid, especially in psychoanalysis.